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ABSTRACT

This book and a related museum exhibition grew out of a student oral history project on the history of the Santa Fe Indian School, 1890-1990, and the role of the school in the development of Indian communities in New Mexico. Numerous interview excerpts and photographs portray life at the school during historical periods covered in four chapters: 1890-1929, 1930-45, 1946-62, and 1963-90. The first chapter describes how the school's original purpose, education and acculturation of American Indian (primarily Pueblo) children, was pursued through forced attendance, military-type training, hard work, and removal from all things Indian. In the 1930s, the institution began to be seen as a community school, and Indian students came to the school out of choice rather than coercion. By the 1930s, reforms in federal policy resulted in improved conditions due to funding increases; the abolition of marching; updated vocational education programs; classes in American Indian art, culture, and history; student self-government; and Indian representation on the staff. After World War II, there was a national shift back to an assimilationist approach to Indian education, but the school had become a local tradition by then; the nostalgic comments by students and teachers do not reveal these national policy shifts. In 1957, the vocational program was abolished, and in 1962, the school was closed and turned over the to the Institute of American Indian Arts in spite of protest from school employees and the All Pueblo Council. In 1977, the newly reorganized All Indian Pueblo Council contracted with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to operate the Albuquerque Indian School and in 1981, successfully petitioned to relocate the school to the Santa Fe Indian School. The final chapter describes current conditions and student opinions of the

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school. Also included are an essay "The Path to Self-Determination: American Indian Education, 1940-1990" (Margaret Connell Szasz), many photographs, a description of the oral history project, recommended reading and viewing, a selected bibliography, and an index. (TD)

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